

Factsheet

This factsheet tells you what you need to know about and agree to if you want to participate in one of SDMNY’s pilot programs. You can ask for help to understand this information by contacting the SDMNY Project Assistant, Guadalupe Vidal, at (212) 396-7806.

What is SDMNY?

SDMNY is a joint project of Hunter College/CUNY, NYS Association of Community and Residential Agencies (NYSACRA), Disability Rights New York (DRNY), and the Arc of Westchester with funding from the NYS Developmental Disabilities Planning Council (DDPC). SDMNY aims to promote **supported decision-making** as an alternative to guardianship for persons with intellectual or developmental disabilities (I/DD) in New York State. In our project, we refer to persons with I/DD as “**decision-makers**” or “**DMs.**”

How do the SDMNY pilot programs work?

SDMNY has two pilot programs. The **Diversion pilot** is for DMs who are not under guardianship. The **Restoration pilot** is for DMs who are already under guardianship. Each pilot has 4 basic steps:

- 1) First, you will work with a trained **facilitator** on a worksheet to map out how you make decisions now and how you want to make decisions in the future, including:
 - in what areas—like money or education—you might want support,
 - in what areas you want to make decisions without any support, and
 - what kinds of support you want.
- 2) Then, you will work with your facilitator to choose one or more **supporters** whom you trust to help you make decisions in the future and begin to think about how you want them to support you.
- 3) Next, you and your facilitator will meet several times with your chosen supporters, using your worksheet to write a **supported decision-making agreement (SDMA)**, which spells out:
 - how you would like to receive support from your supporters,
 - whom you would like to receive support from,
 - what decisions you would like to receive support for, and
 - how you will make decisions with your supporters.
- 4) Last, you and your supporters will practice using the SDMA so that you can make decisions in your daily life, and then **you will all sign the SDMA.**



If you are part of the **Restoration** pilot, you can get free legal assistance from DRNY to go back to court to undo your guardianship and restore your rights.

What is my role in the SDMNY pilot?

You will work with your assigned facilitator through each step of the process. Although you will have a facilitator to help you, **you will drive the process.** **You** will choose your supporters, **you** will make an agreement with them, and **you** will tell your supporters how you want them to help you.



If you want, you can also be part of the **project evaluation** done by the Council on Quality and Leadership (CQL). CQL has helped organizations to improve the quality of services for persons with I/DD for over 40 years. If you agree to share your SDMNY experiences with CQL, you can help us to understand how to make our project better for future DMs. But speaking with CQL is **optional**. That means if you decide not to share any information with CQL, you can still participate in SDMNY without a problem.

What do I get out of participating in the SDMNY pilot?

Working with one of our trained facilitators, you will end up with an SDMA that may help you and your supporters deal with benefits and services, or with others who might want to be sure that you can make your own decisions. You will also be part of a very big, very exciting movement, with people from all over the world, who are working to be sure that people with I/DD have the right to make their own decisions, and not to be put under guardianship.



How will SDMNY use information about me?

SDMNY will make sure all information about you is kept **secure and confidential**. We will keep any written information about you in a locked storage available only to the people working on the pilot. We will keep electronic material in a folder secured with a password that only the people working on the pilot will know.



How long will the facilitation process last?

Your facilitator will meet with you at least once a month for about **6 months** to develop the SDMA with you and your chosen supporters. But depending on many factors, the process may go more quickly or more slowly. We expect that you will meet with your facilitator at least once per month for an hour, but you may meet more often if needed.



What happens after the pilot program is over?

After making your SDMA, your facilitator will meet with you to talk about your involvement and how you and your supporters want to work together in the future. We will follow up from time to time to see how things are going or if you need any more help from us. You can keep any materials and tools we give you during the pilot. Using information from the pilot, we will revise the supported decision-making materials for future pilot participants like yourself.

What if I want to stop doing SDMNY?

Our pilot programs may not be right for everyone. You **can stop at any time** without problems. Also, you can ask us to make changes to the process for you, such as accommodations that will make the process easier for you. If you decide to leave the project, we will want to talk with you about your decision and try to resolve any difficulties you had with our pilot program, but will respect and honor your decision.



What if I want to make a complaint?

If you are not happy with the way we do things in the pilot, you may make a complaint to the SDMNY Project Coordinator Matthew Smith, Esq. at (212) 396-7754 or matthew.smith@hunter.cuny.edu.

